

THE NECESSITY OF MASTICATION.

A CASE recently reported in a contemporary conveys most valuable lessons, especially to those who are careless concerning the manner in which they masticate their food. A child who was taken ill was found to be suffering from an impacted mass of undigested nuts in the rectum, which had finally to be removed by instrumental means, the boy being under the influence of an anæsthetic. It was most fortunate for him that the obstruction occurred at a point where it could be so efficiently and easily dealt with. If, for example, the nuts had become packed together higher up the intestinal canal, it might have required even the opening of the abdomen to localise and remove the danger. The cause of the mischief was found to be that the child was suffering from many decayed teeth, and could not therefore masticate his food, and the result might have been the same even if more easily digestible materials than nuts had been devoured. It is not sufficiently understood that if the food is not properly broken up and crushed by the action of the teeth, worse evils than indigestion may ensue, and that not only will the stomach and intestines be unable to complete the disintegration and absorption of the nutritious elements, but they will often, as in the case just related, be unable to propel and eliminate the resulting mass, which will then become a source of direct and serious danger to life.

A SCHOOL OF COOKERY.

ACCORDING to a contemporary, a German millionaire has by will founded and endowed a National School of Cookery, which in its method is eminently practical and congenial to the spirit of the Fatherland. The children admitted to the school are taught to do everything for themselves, but are instructed how to do so not only in the best and in the most economical methods, but also upon definite physiological principles. They have each day to choose what the materials of the meal they are about to prepare shall be, and the objects to be attained are not only the cheapness but the best food values of the selected dietary. "To aid them in their selection and choice of comestibles a list is hung up on the wall, whereon the exact amount of nourishment each food substance contains is carefully explained—for instance how much 'good nourishment' there is in meat, flour, vegetables, and groceries, respectively; and on this list it is also clearly shown on good scientific principles how much of each nourishing substance each individual requires *per diem*." It would be well for this country if our Board Schools, which are supposed to give instruction in cookery to their girl pupils, would base their system on the simple and comprehensive plan which has been thus adopted in Germany.

Opium Prescribing in New York.

A WELL-KNOWN New York physician, writing to one of the daily papers, deals with the evils arising from the somewhat indiscriminate and lavish prescribing of opium, and gives the following account of his investigation into the matter.

"Listen to these few figures, doctors, and then explain them if you can. To me they are an enigma I ceased trying to classify and study out long ago.

In a little drug shop in the very heart of the most populous district in the east side less than a week ago, I saw over 300 odd prescriptions. Most of them were combinations such as are used by us in our every day practice. By actual count forty-nine of them contained opium in one or other of its forms. The prescriptions were not sorted out, they were taken in rotation just as they came in to be filled, and twelve of them contained such large quantities that only could be prescribed for one long accustomed to the use of the narcotic.

Further down, where poverty and misery are more prevalent, in that part of the city where tall, badly ventilated tenements are still allowed to be inhabited by human beings, I opened another of these wire worms that had gathered dust in a remote corner for two years and told off 300 prescriptions as they ran and looked them over. It was at once evident that opium is still too dear for the pocketbook of the poor man. Here only thirty-four contained opium, and the doses were ever so much smaller.

Curiosity then took me up town, where a dollar is not turned over so often before it is spent. The prescriptions were carefully numbered and pasted into a big scrap book for ready reference. It was less of a task to read them over, and the signatures were those of our better doctors, who charge 2 dollars or more for a consultation.

Think of it! Fifty-one in a string of 300 had opium as their chief ingredient. The other drugs written for were mainly menstrums, or better vehicles to carry the drug and give it a disguise.

But this is not all.

Of the total number of prescriptions that were compounded a second time in nine drug stores 40 per cent. were those that had opium in them. In the same establishments 63 per cent. of all that were refilled a third time had opium or morphine in them.

STARTLING FIGURES.

These figures ought to set every honest doctor thinking.

One druggist, who kept a record of his pre-

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